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May 7, 2021

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Municipal Clerks: Please forward to your Mayor, Governing Body, and Department Heads.

To assist in providing guidance and information we have created a [COVID-19 resource page](#). We will continue to update the page as we get pertinent information and include announcements in our Daily Updates.

I. State Issues

a. COVID-19 Weekly Update

Earlier this week Governor Murphy issued [Executive Order 238](#) easing certain restrictions on indoor dining, bar seating, outdoor gatherings, and more. The Governor also announced that, effective May 19, New Jersey will remove COVID-19 capacity restrictions for indoor dining and eliminate all restrictions for outdoor dining as well lifting ban on interstate indoor youth competitions. Governor Murphy stated, “These are the most aggressive steps we have taken to reopen to date, and we feel confident that we can do this safely because our numbers have trended decisively in the right direction over the past three weeks.”

In addition the Governor announced a website for homebound individuals to connect with a vaccine provider; using the mega-sites to move available doses directly into neighboring community centers and medical offices to make vaccinations more localized and more widely available; and detailed the specifics of the Shot and a Beer Vaccine Incentive program.

COVID Data for May 6, 2021:

- 1,564 new positive cases for a total of 871,333 confirmed cases
- 34 new confirmed deaths for a total of 22,904 confirmed deaths
- The rate of transmission is at 0.42
- 1,157 cases linked to 263 school outbreaks since August 2020
- 7,373,075 vaccine doses have been administered, including 4,362,552 who have received at least one dose and 3,278,405 who are fully vaccinated. 54% are Pfizer, 43% Moderna, and 4% J&J.

Vaccine Information

Homebound residents who have not yet connected with their local health department, or a home health agency, and who need an in-home vaccination should visit www.covid19.nj.gov/HomeboundVax or contact the call center. The Department of Health will follow up with them to assist in connecting them with a vaccine provider.

As a reminder anyone 16 and older living, working, or studying in New Jersey is eligible for COVID-19 vaccines. The State hotline, 855-568-0545, continues to assist residents, with live agents from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., in getting information on how to register, as well as how to schedule vaccine appointments as people become eligible. The agents remind residents that there is no out-of-pocket expense to get vaccinated and that the two vaccines are not interchangeable.

All six of New Jersey's COVID-19 vaccine mega-sites are now offering walk-in vaccinations. A person does not need an appointment to get vaccinated nor do they need to be a resident of a specific county to get vaccinated at the mega-sites.

As previously reported, New Jersey has launched a [COVID-19 vaccine appointment finder](#) to assist in scheduling an appointment.

Executive Orders

[Executive Order 238](#): Easing of restrictions, including a removal of all percentage capacity limits for indoor and outdoor businesses, a lifting of the prohibition on indoor bar seating, and an end to the outdoor gathering limit effective today.

Shot and a Beer Vaccine Incentive Program

In partnership with the Brewer's Guild of New Jersey, the State has launched the "[Shot and a Beer](#)" program to encourage eligible residents 21 and older to get vaccinated. Any resident who gets their first vaccine dose in the month of May and takes their vaccination card to a participating brewery as proof of vaccination will receive a free beer, courtesy of the participating brewery. This program will end on May 31, 2021.

Your Voice Your Shot Video Contest

As a reminder, the "[Your Voice, Your Shot](#)" video contest, which urges New Jersey residents to share why they and others are getting vaccinated, deadline is May 11, 2021.

Unemployment Information

The [Department of Labor announced](#) for the week ending April 30 the initial weekly unemployment claims was 14,073. As a reminder, the American Rescue Plan extends Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation, which is the \$300 supplement, to eligible claimants for 25 weeks, through September 4.

Contacts:

- Mike Cerra, Executive Director, mcerra@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x120.
- Lori Buckelew, Assistant Executive Director, lbuckelew@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x112.

b. League Testifies and Expresses Concerns on S-3688

On Thursday, the Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee discussed a committee substitute for S-3688 that requires municipalities to take into account the potential effects of approving the construction and operation of retail warehouses on neighboring municipalities. The sponsor acknowledged that this was a work in progress and the beginning of a conversation. While the legislation was not released by the committee, Senate President Steve Sweeney assigned it to the Senate Budget Committee.

Mike Cerra, League Executive Director, testified and raised concerns regarding home rule issues, municipal responsibilities, constitutionality, and application timelines. While the League has not taken a position on the legislation, we advised the sponsor and members of the committee that the League is reviewing the new language and would provide comments and analysis shortly.

Contact: Frank Marshall, Esq., Associate General Counsel, fmarshall@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x137.

c. Governor Takes Action

- **Governor Signs Legislation Coordinating COVID-19 Goods and Services**

On Thursday, Governor Murphy signed into law [A-4461/S-2698](#) which would require the Department of Education (DOE) to coordinate procurement of COVID-19 related goods and services with the lead agency of any cooperative purchasing system that includes one or more boards of education. P.L. 2020, c. 77 took effect immediately but will expire on July 1, 2022.

Contact: Lori Buckelew, Assistant Executive Director, lbuckelew@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x112.

- **Governor Signs Legislation Expanding Project Labor Agreements Requirements**

On April 30, Governor Murphy signed [S-3414/A-5378](#), which promotes workforce diversity in public works projects and revises “public works projects” definition to permit project labor agreements for more projects. P.L. 2021, c. 63, which takes effect immediately,

review our [recent blog post](#).

Contact: Lori Buckelew, Assistant Executive Director, lbuckelew@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x112.

- **Electronic Permitting Bill Signed Into Law**

Last week, Governor Murphy signed [A-1145/S-1739](#) (now, P.L.2021, c.70) into law. The new law requires the Department of Community Affairs to establish and implement an “Electronic Permit Processing Review System” which would serve as a web-based system for the electronic submission of applications for construction permits, plans, and specifications, required under the State Uniform Construction Code Act. The electronic system would also provide a platform for the electronic review and approval of applications, the scheduling of inspections, and the exchange of information during the review process.

Based on feedback received from the League and local officials, this bill was amended to make it permissive for local agencies. Local enforcing agencies **may** elect to use the electronic system created by the DCA or can chose to utilize a different electronic system, as long as it provides the same level of functionality as the DCA’s system. A municipality **may**, for a three-year period commencing with a local enforcing agency’s initial participation in the electronic permit processing review system, impose and collect a construction permit surcharge fee to defray the enforcing agency’s startup costs related to offering electronic review and scheduling.

You should review this new law with your construction official and municipal attorney for more information.

Contact: Frank Marshall, Esq., Associate General Counsel, fmarshall@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x137.

d. Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee Releases S-1416

On Thursday, the Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee favorably released [S-1416](#) by a vote of 5-0. The League supports this legislation which would permit the governing body of a municipality with a population of 30,000, or less to serve as the local board of health. Under current law, every municipality is required to have a board of health. Presently, the only the governing bodies members in the township form of governments are permitted to serve as the local board of health, and, even then, the option is limited to townships of not more than 20,000 residents. We strongly believe that this option should be available to all municipalities, regardless of their form of government.

The Assembly companion, A-139 has been referred to the Assembly State and Local Government Committee and has yet be scheduled for a hearing. Please contact your Senator and Assembly Representatives expressing support for S-1416/A-139.

Contact: Paul Penna, Legislative Analyst, ppenna@njlm.org, 609 695-3481, x110.

e. Municipalities Encouraged to Apply for New Round of Green Acres Funding

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has [announced](#) a new round of funding available under the State's Green Acres program. Municipalities, counties, and eligible nonprofit organizations are invited to apply for funding for land acquisition, park development, and natural resource stewardship projects.

Applications will be accepted through June 30, 2021. Additional information along with links to applications can be found on the [DEP's website](#).

Contact: Frank Marshall, Esq., Associate General Counsel, fmarshall@njlm.org, 609-695-3481, x137.

II. Federal Issues

a. NTIA Announces Broadband Grant Programs and Webinar Series

The National Telecommunication and Information Administration's (NTIA) BroadbandUSA program will host a series of webinars on [new broadband infrastructure grant programs](#).

Local governments may be eligible to partner on these grant awards. In advance of the release of Notice of Funding Opportunities, NTIA will host [a webinar series](#) to provide more details about these programs and which projects are eligible for funding.

Funding includes a \$300 million Broadband Infrastructure Deployment Grant program directed to partnerships between a state and municipality with a fixed broadband services to support broadband infrastructure deployment to areas where broadband is lacking; and a \$285 million Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Minority-Serving Institutions for the purchase of broadband internet access service, equipment, as well as hiring and training of information technology personnel.

Contact: Paul Penna, Legislative Analyst, ppenna@njlm.org, 609 695-3481, x110.

b. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency Eliminates Fees for Use of .gov Domain

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) [announced last week](#) that it would no longer assess registration or renewal fees for use of its .gov web domain, in an effort to increase .gov adoption by smaller government entities.

For more information, please see the [League's recent blog post](#).

Contact: Paul Penna, Legislative Analyst, ppenna@njlm.org, 609 695-3481, x110.

III. 2020 Annual League Conference

a. It's Not Too Late!

We hope that the NJLM Virtual Conference allowed you to look back and forward on the challenges of the day, be it the COVID-19 pandemic, social and restorative justice or how to balance the competing interests in preparing for your 2021 budget. While we expect to be back in-person in Atlantic City in 2021, the virtual conference offers a unique benefit. The content of the approximately 80 programs and 145 virtual exhibitor booths will be available on-demand through October 31, 2021.

Anyone who is registered can simply log in to [the Conference website](#) to view any of the programs or visit any of the exhibitor booths. And for those who did not attend, it's not too late. We will continue to accept [registrations](#) for access to the Conference site. Those who register now will not be able to apply for CEUs but will have full access to all programs and exhibit booths. And please continue to visit the exhibitors who chose to support the 105th Annual Conference by stopping by their booths. You can contact exhibitors directly with any questions or comments by simply using the "Request Information" button on each booth. This will generate an automatic email to the exhibitor and they will contact you with a reply.

IV. Also of Interest

a. National Brain Tumor Awareness Month

May is national Brain Tumor Awareness month. Currently there are an estimated 700,000 people in United States living with primary brain tumor and approximately 85,000 more will be diagnosed in 2021. Please consider adopting a [resolution proclaiming](#) May 2021 Brain Tumor Awareness Month in your municipality.



New Jersey State League of Municipalities

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